

Spotlight Country: Pakistan

DEMOGRAPHICS

Geographic area: 770,880 sq. km.
 Population: 185,044,286 (2014)
 Below 24 yrs. old: 55%
 Refugee population: 1,505,525
 Urban population: 38.8%
 GDP/capita: \$1,429
 Unemployment: 5.6%
 Below poverty line: 29.5%

COMMUNICATIONS AND LITERACY

FH Media Freedom: Not Free
 Internet users/100 people: 14 (2014)
 Mobile phones/100 people: 73 (2014)
 Literacy: 57%
 Avg. years of education: Females: 7 (2014)
 Males: 9 (2014)

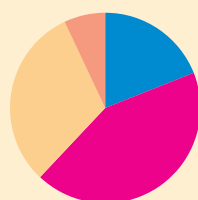
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SPENDING

D&CP Total FY13 Actual: \$2,452,214 FY14 Actual: \$2,182,889 FY15 Actual: \$2,066,644

Total Reported FY13 Actual: \$9,856,499 FY14 Actual: \$3,248,087 FY15 Actual: \$4,203,772

(Total reported funding for FY13, FY14, and FY15 cannot be compared directly due to delays in reporting from long program cycles.)

D&CP PD Spending by Theme

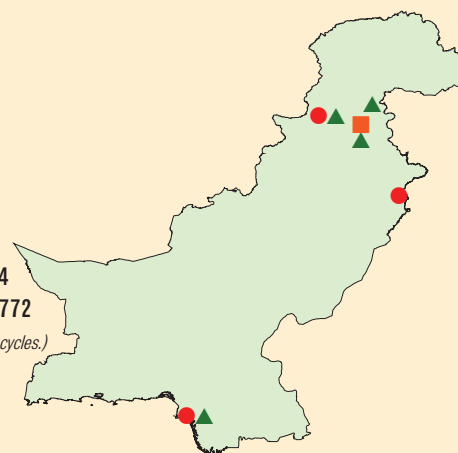


Piechart Key: PD Spending by Theme

Culture Education Economics Science Youth
 Democracy Civil Society Women Military Religious CVE Other

D&CP Spending by Activity

Not Available



Map Key

Embassy Consulate
 American Space

RECOMMENDATIONS:

INCREASE BOTH CORE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY BUDGETS FOR PAKISTAN AS RELYING ON ECONOMIC SUPPORT FUNDS IS UNSUSTAINABLE:

It is imperative that the base PD budget for Pakistan in the Diplomatic and Consular Program (D&CP) budget increase considerably and that additional funding be sought from Congress in the Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE) budget for exchanges with Pakistan. The Fulbright program, which is currently boasted as being the largest in the world and is the flagship PD program in Pakistan, as well as other programs such as the English Access Microscholarship Program and alumni engagement, are sustained at their current surge levels by foreign assistance funding. Currently, in fiscal year 2016, approximately \$55 million of temporary Economic Support Funds, Overseas Contingency Operations funds (ESF-OCO) and Public Diplomacy Overseas Contingency Operations (PD-OCO) funds carry PD activities.¹ ESF-OCO funds for Pakistan have been in steady decline since their peak of 2010, and will decrease significantly again through fiscal year 2017. The ECE budget – currently at more than \$590 million – would need more than an additional \$30 million to absorb and maintain current program levels in Pakistan. For the sake

of sustaining relationships with the 19,000 alumni, leveraging the programs that exist to reach key mission goals, and creating new networks, there cannot be a steep decline in PD activity in Pakistan. A sustainable spending plan for Pakistan is essential for the mission to plan future programs while setting appropriate expectations with the Pakistani alumni and public.

FOCUS ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING ON TEACHERS TO MAKE IT MORE SUSTAINABLE:

The long-term normalization of the PD budget in Pakistan will need to include space for English language education and training. Pakistan has the largest English language program in the world with 3,000 current students supported by \$2 million annually and \$15 million in open grants. In order to promote long-term sustainability of quality English language teaching, we recommend a shift in the focus of efforts from teaching students to training Pakistani teachers charged with teaching English. In FY 2015, 450 teachers were trained, a number which could be doubled in order to reach more students in the long term, via a combination of virtual and in country face-to-face programs and exchanges.

EXPAND CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM IN KARACHI TO REGIONAL JOURNALISTS:

In order

¹ Note: In fiscal year 2016, Pakistan receives both fiscal year 2016/2017 PD funds and fiscal year 2015/2016 ESF money.

to ensure the Center for Excellence in Journalism's sustainability, and the sustainability of training programs for Pakistani journalists overall, we recommend additional funds be allocated for journalists not based in Karachi so they can travel to the center for coursework. Professional journalism in Pakistan is a critical U.S. public diplomacy goal and it is essential that this center get maximum use, which will also diminish costs for journalism exchange programs to the U.S.

INCREASE INTERACTION & TRAINING FOR LOCAL STAFF: Since there is such high turnover among the American professionals, it is important the local Pakistani PD professionals in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar feel connected to one another. We recommend that they gather for a retreat at least once a year, where they can also receive in-country skills training along with some of their American counterparts.

INCREASE AUDIENCE RESEARCH FOR ALL MEDIA AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OUTREACH: The press and social media team at the embassy needs to have consistent audience research to better understand the changing attitudes of the Pakistani population and target their messages, video content and the mediums to deliver both accordingly. This consistent research will also greatly benefit the rest of the section in understanding how to best execute programming and monitor their progress.

OVERVIEW

The bilateral relationship between the United States and Pakistan is on somewhat steady ground after several years of turmoil and uncertainty. Straightforward or even positive coverage of the relationship has increased, however the Government of Pakistan and the military, continue to strategically use anti-American rhetoric, the Pakistani news media regularly amplifies conspiracy theories, and just 22 percent of the Pakistani public has a favorable view of the U.S., according to the 2015 Pew Global Attitudes Project. In order to advance critical U.S. mission goals, it is essential for public diplomacy to build relationships and trust with government officials, civil society leaders, academics, media representatives and youth. The Public Affairs Sections (PAS), which are part of the U.S. Mission in Pakistan, have built a credible network of Pakistani partners and alumni through its programs. These alumni remain active through the Pakistani U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN), the largest alumni network of U.S. programs worldwide.

The United States is profoundly humanized through people-to-people ties. U.S. Public diplomacy (PD) efforts in Pakistan aim to emphasize with the Pakistani public our countries' shared interests in the advancement of democracy and peace, security, and economic development, both

within Pakistan and the South Asia region. The core mission goals that PD supports are to reduce violent extremism and terrorism, encourage strategic stability, and promote economic growth and development of government capacity. A consistent level of engagement in the country is essential in Pakistan as isolation from the public provokes suspicion about U.S. activities. As PAS for the U.S. mission in Pakistan operate in a highly restrictive and critical threat security environment, the resources to support U.S.-based exchanges like Fulbright and outreach platforms such as the English language learning programs, American Spaces, and alumni networks are critical.

ACPD has a major concern about the sustainability of the current funding for public diplomacy activities, which was at about \$55 million in fiscal year 2016. The vast majority of this funding comes from ESF-OCO and PD-OCO funds, which are temporary and will inevitably decrease. We believe it is essential that, going forward from fiscal year 2017, PAS begin to adjust towards sustainable levels for its programs while the administration seeks Congressional support for normalizing the majority of Pakistan PD programs into the core D&CP and ECE budgets.

BUDGET SUSTAINABILITY

The 2009 diplomatic surges in Afghanistan and Pakistan were accompanied by sharp increases in ESF funding, which was applied in part to surge PD activities in both countries to help achieve the U.S. government's priority foreign assistance goals. ESF-OCO and PD-OCO funds were applied to expand key programs such as the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (UGRAD), the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship, the International Visitor Leadership Program, and English language programs. The Fulbright Program in Pakistan has received \$19.5 million in ESF for expanded activity since 2006 through transfers to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) from the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program in Pakistan, which supports Pakistani teenagers to study at an American high school for a year, also currently receives ESF-OCO funding for expanded reach. This program targets underserved populations and allows them to have a transformative experience in the United States, while also teaching American youth about Pakistan. In fiscal year 2015, the loss of ECE-OCO funding and competing priorities in a declining ESF-OCO budget has resulted in the number of participants declining. Another ECA program model that targets underserved Pakistani youth, the English Access Microscholarship Program, is a critical youth leadership program in Pakistan that advances multiple mission objectives and with PD-OCO funds from PAS Islamabad.

These ESF-OCO and PD-OCO funds for Pakistan will continue to diminish and supplemental OCO funding will not continue indefinitely. It is critical that the incoming

administration work with Congress to normalize Pakistan exchange and English language programs in the PD base accounts going forward. The ECE budget – currently at more than \$590 million -- would need more than an additional \$30 million to absorb and maintain current program levels in Pakistan.

In addition, an increase of PD base budget spending is also critical in order to pay the salaries of the locally employed staff in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar and all of the press and social media engagement, countering violent extremism, civil society grants, and other information programs. Currently, in fiscal year 2016, there is only \$435,000 of Enduring D&CP spending for PAS Pakistan, which is roughly .008 percent of the total \$55 million budget. A sustainable funding stream for Pakistan is essential for the mission to plan future programs while setting appropriate expectations with the Pakistani alumni and public.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICE: COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Pakistan currently ranks fourth in the world for the number of incidents and deaths due to violent extremism. In the last two years, it has endured repeated terrorist and violent extremist attacks, including the one at Lahore Park in March 2016, Bacha Khan University in Charsadda in January 2016, the Army Public School in Peshawar in December 2014, and the Air Force Base in Badaber in September 2015.

Reducing violent extremism and terrorism to make Pakistan more stable is the number one U.S. mission goal in Pakistan as it also improves U.S. national security. In 2011, the Community Engagement Office (CEO) was created within PAS Islamabad to “reduce the number of individuals in Pakistan who accept the legitimacy of ideologies and narratives that justify the use of politically minded violence counter to U.S. national interests.” The office’s efforts aim to increase “civilian and non-civilian capacity to counter violent extremist narratives with a focus on vulnerable populations.” It currently operates with \$1.8 million of ESF-OCO funding and \$700,000 of PD-OCO funding that goes towards grants, messaging, and outreach to universities and research. It would like to increase its budget to \$4 million.

Recently, the office has identified gaps where they could make a greater contribution: increasing the civilian government’s capacity to counter violent narratives and strengthen their partnership with Pakistani civil society in these efforts; training and building the news media’s capacity to examine the root causes and potential solutions

for ending violence;² and creating messages that rationally and emotionally connect with Pakistanis to do the same. This involves working with traditional PD tools to train journalists in-country and through visitor programs; enhancing media literacy among the public via English language programs, critical thinking workshops, university partners, and American spaces programming; and expanding online dialogue via social media platforms. The CEO works to improve the quantity and quality of research on the drivers and effective counters of extremism in the Pakistani context. It also supports CVE activists within Pakistan through cooperative agreements and grants, building and sustaining their brands, having them participate in exchanges and training programs, and leveraging partnerships to create a community of interest.

The embassy has an internal CVE working group that unites pertinent sections of the mission, in addition to an international CVE working group that coordinates activities with allied groups. There can be, however, a lack of coordination with Washington, especially when it comes to funding. The office gains just under \$2 million in ESF-OCO money, which is temporary. There are no central repositories for money at the State Department on this community engagement work and no clear way on how they can apply for it. It is important that funding for this work be added to the D&CP .7 budget for Pakistan. It would also help if there was a regional community of practice where officials in the Pakistan office could work with those in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and India.

SOCIAL AND TRADITIONAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

While the U.S. government is unpopular in Pakistan, Americans are not. PD social media efforts try to put a human face on the mission through videos in the Urdu, Sindhi, and Pashto languages via Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Instagram platforms. Pakistanis who travel to the United States on exchanges also share their experiences via social media content. While some IIP campaigns are useful to PAS Islamabad, Pakistan has a crowded, competitive, and highly charged media environment. Localized content matters to connect with Pakistani-specific audiences.

The social media program in Pakistan focuses on connecting with Pakistani youth through providing original, short video content. The video content is created for distribution via social and traditional news media platforms. A video of Ambassador David Hale’s visit to Pakistan’s largest mosque, Faisal Mosque, was picked up by the English-language newspapers Dawn, The Nation and the Daily Times. The videos also highlight other U.S. embassy officials to

² The media must keep extremists accountable while shaping narratives that counter their message and provide a public service to Pakistanis wanting to live in peace. The media “is a critical vehicle to convey ideas that legitimize or delegitimize terrorists, violent extremist groups and narratives.”

showcase their expertise, i.e. clean energy and economics, and make them and their policy portfolios more tangible for the Pakistani public. The four videos on the U.S.-Pakistan Clean Energy partnership had 671,800 views, 17,200 likes, and 2,500 shares by August 2016.

The campaign, #ThisIsPakistan, shows U.S. embassy officials appreciating Pakistani food and culture, and local heroes, like Master Ayub, who has taught young children English for free for 29 years. Collectively, they have had more than 10.8 million views and 55,000 shares by August 2016. Post also links to IIP's "ShareAmerica" content, which receives anywhere from 300 to 2,000 link clicks.

At the time of writing, Embassy Islamabad and Consulates General Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar have a combined six million followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The respective social media teams create original content in addition to sharing each other's posts. Social media teams also monitor and share relevant content from other U.S. Government organizations such as USAID Pakistan. Specifically, the Embassy Facebook page had 2 million followers (the second-largest U.S. embassy page; the U.S. embassy in Dhaka has 3 million followers); they gain an average of 20,000 new followers a week. Sixty-three percent of the followers are men between the ages of 18-34, and 30 percent are women in the same age bracket.

Consulate General Karachi has also taken the lead in organizing periodic social media workshops to promote collaboration between the embassy and consulates' social media teams. To enhance outreach, the embassy and consulates have also worked with partner organizations such as the International Education and Research Network (iEARN), the Access English-language Microscholarship Program, the Pakistan U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN), and the U.S. Educational Foundation Pakistan (USEFP) to produce and disseminate quality content, providing them exposure to a wider audience.

PAKISTANI LOCAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PROFESSIONALS' SUPPORT

The local public diplomacy professionals for the U.S. Mission in Pakistan have remained committed to the goals and activities of the Public Affairs Sections for many years and have worked with many American professionals who often serve one-year tours. They believe strongly that PD work can be maximized if all PD professionals can have more mobility to reach more Pakistani audiences. The restrictive security environment makes it very difficult to do more outreach than is already being done. However, local PD professionals can help their American colleagues make the case to security officials for why certain outreach activities are mission essential.

In addition, since there is such high turnover among the American professionals, it is important the local Pakistani PD professionals in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and

Peshawar feel connected to one another. We recommend that they gather for a retreat at least once a year, where they can also receive in-country skills training along with some of their American counterparts. Critical to this training is grants and budgeting, as the staff handles millions of U.S. dollars.

CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

The Center for Excellence in Journalism is a \$4 million investment in the future of professional journalism in Pakistan. It was successfully launched on February 22, 2016 with the support of the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication at Washington State University and the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. The concept is that more training for journalists, photojournalists and communicators – in Pakistan and the region – will take place in country in a more sustainable fashion at the Center in Karachi rather than relying on exchange programs. There is a tradition of mass communications degrees in Pakistan, but not a specific focus on journalism training.

The Center has a one-year Masters program for 30-40 students beginning in fall 2016, and shorter certificate programs for journalism-based skills, including one for NGO communication specialists who work with journalists. Three of the Center's faculty members are attending the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern in preparation for their teaching roles. The Center also does extensive outreach to thousands of journalists throughout the region and also hosts alumni events and facilitates U.S. sponsored exchanges and is open to journalists from other countries.

In order to ensure the Center's sustainability and support Pakistanis' access to accurate information through professional journalism, we recommend additional funds to be allocated for journalists not based in Karachi to be able to travel to the center for coursework. Professional journalism in Pakistan is a critical U.S. public diplomacy goal and it is essential that this center get maximum use, which will also diminish costs for journalism exchange programs to the United States.

EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS & THE PUAN NETWORK: LARGEST FOREIGN PUBLIC OUTREACH WORLDWIDE

The U.S. mission in Pakistan manages 38 cultural and exchange programs in order to build relationships with a skeptical Pakistani public. The exchanges team in PAS

manages 17 of them³ that engage more than 120 Pakistanis and the cultural team manages two ECA programs (Center Stage and One Beat). The implementing partner iEARN runs the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES) for 100 Pakistani youth and the Summer Sisters Institute for roughly 17 participants. The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (Fulbright Commission) -- through offices in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi -- runs 21 of them that engage more than 570 Pakistanis.⁴ These include the core Fulbright programs, the EducationUSA network, the PUAN alumni network, and the Prometric testing centers. A total of roughly 5,000 Pakistanis and 900 Americans have participated in all USEFP-run programs; in FY 2015, there were 595 grantees.

Pakistan currently receives the largest amount of U.S. government funding of any Fulbright Program worldwide. The USAID Mission in Pakistan, in consultation with the Government of Pakistan, initiated a five-year agreement in FY 2005, under which USAID agreed to support the Fulbright Program by providing up to \$19.5 million annually through an Economic Support Fund (ESF) transfer to ECA. Fulbright continues to receive \$19.5 million in ESF-OCO annually. In a major recognition of Fulbright's value to Pakistan, in 2016, the Government of Pakistan agreed to provide more than \$5 million annually for five years to fund up to 125 additional Pakistani Ph.D. scholars to study in the United States. As of September 2016, the first \$5 million has already come through.

Since 1950, the Fulbright Program in Pakistan has funded more than 3,000 Pakistanis to study and conduct research in the United States and more than 800 U.S. citizens to study, conduct research, and lecture in Pakistan. Between 2010-2016, there were 45 Americans who went to Pakistan on the Fulbright Specialist Program and six on the Fulbright Scholar Program. The security situation in Pakistan makes it difficult for Americans to pursue long-term

³ SUSI on Public Policy; SUSI on Women Leadership; SUSI for Scholars and Secondary School Educators; IVLP; Secretary of State's Annual International Women of Courage Award; Fortune/Global Women's Mentoring Partnership; International Writing Program; Sports Visitors; Global Sports Mentoring Program; SCA Region Legislative Fellows Program; American Council for Young Political Leaders; Instructional Leadership Institute for Pakistani Educators Summer Program; Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Coca Cola Scholarship Program; U.S. – Pakistan Professional Partnership for Journalists; Atlas Corps Pakistani Fellowship; Foreign Press reporting tours; and the Critical Thinking Forum Exchange Program.

⁴ Fulbright Master's Program, Fulbright Ph.D. program, Fulbright Scholar Program (U.S. and Pakistan), Fulbright (U.S.) Specialist Program, Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant, Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program, Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan, Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program, Community College Initiative (CCIP), Community College Administrator Program (CCAP), and the U.S. – Pakistan Professional Partnership for Journalists.

programs in Pakistan. Since 2006, there have been 939 Masters students and 197 Ph.D. students supported under Fulbright in the United States. The most Pakistani Fulbright students came from Karachi, Lahore and other Punjab areas. Fifty-five percent were female and 45 percent were male. Most of them came from the private sector and they mainly studied engineering, social sciences and business/finance – fields that are key to the development of Pakistan and the advancement of U.S. objectives for Pakistan's growth and resilience. In FY 2015, USEFP conducted outreach to more than 70,000 students in 35 cities and through extensive social media networks.

PUAN: The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP, the Fulbright Commission) also co-manages the Pakistan – US Alumni Network (PUAN), which is among the largest U.S. government exchange alumni networks worldwide, with significant participation from English language program alumni. It consists of more than 19,000 members in 12 national chapters and is funded through a five year \$3.1 million grant. The Humphrey Alumni Association of Pakistan (HAAP) has nine Humphrey chapters. PUAN disperses small grants for projects that focus on community service, entrepreneurship, journalism training, women's empowerment, cultural preservation, and other issues.⁵

EducationUSA: There are three EducationUSA Centers – in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi – that make more than 840,000 contacts a year. Eleven advisors and four staff members conduct outreach, guide students through the U.S. application process, train local school counselors, support U.S. admissions representatives, run mock admission tests, and other support functions. The Pakistani High School Counselors' Tours to the United States included 20 counselors who visited 17 colleges and universities in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa. In 2016, 17 counselors visited 18 higher education institutions in California and Arizona. A new Career Pathways program is a three-week summer exchange for 30 high school students to explore various career paths in classrooms in Iowa, Indiana and Illinois. The program, minus airfare, costs \$3,000 and is self-funded by the students.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING:

Since 2012, a Regional English Language Officer has been based exclusively in Pakistan and works throughout the country. Pakistan has the largest English programming portfolio in the world, with 3,000 current Access students and \$2 million annually and \$15 million in open grants. The programs include Access; English Works!, which focuses

⁵ The Fulbright Heroes Short Documentary Series was a 14 part series released in July 2016 that featured Fulbright alumni who are leading change in Pakistan and was produced in collaboration with Oscar-winning Fulbright alumnae Haya Fatima Iqbal.

on older youth audiences; and a radio program, which focuses on teacher training for teachers at the primary school level; in-country teacher training; and exchange programs, like the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA), which brings 20 English language teachers to the United States for a six week professional development program. TEA in Pakistan is administered via IREX in the United States. The Regional English Language Office (RELO) funds and facilitates (when ECA/A/L funded) a variety of small exchange programs each year for administrators, teachers, and students connected to English language teaching and learning. The timing, length, and content of these programs vary due to shifting funding levels and Bureau and Mission priorities. Often participants may already be alumni of in-country RELO programs, such as English Language Specialist-led Teacher Training Institutes or Post's English Access Microscholarship Program. Most RELO programs are focused on public-sector educators and students, with a specific concentration on hard-to-reach areas and vulnerable or marginalized populations. Typically these programs are implemented by a local or U.S.-based partner organization, but RELO staff are involved in selection, including in-person or Skype interviews, and pre-departure briefings for all participants.

The long-term normalization of the PD budget in Pakistan will need to include funding for English language training. In fiscal year 2015 roughly 450 teachers were trained, while 3,000 students were directly taught. Since the current elevated level of funding for English language education is not sustainable, the focus should be on teacher training as much as on teaching young people, if not more, to build local capacity.

AMERICAN SPACES

The American Center in Islamabad closed in 2008, but there is currently an Information Resource Center (IRC) in the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad that is used for on-site events and accessible to the public by appointment. There are 18 Lincoln Corners -- small American Spaces at host Pakistani host institutions -- throughout the country, with one more under construction. In order to maintain a degree of security, the coordinators at the Lincoln Corners normally invite specific audiences for programs and then publicize the events afterwards.

The embassy and consulates' locally employed staff are essential to the success of the corners, in creating the terms of the MOUs with the host institutions, in maintaining the relationships with them, and in increasing visitors to the spaces. In the last year, there was an 80 percent increase in foot traffic to the spaces.

Karachi: A new priority American space opened in July 2016 in the Karachi Public Library, a prime space for which the Consulate's Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO) has worked diligently to secure buy-in and to ensure that the open access principles for the space are maintained and that there is also equal access for men and women. There is an average of 1,000 visitors a day to the library (800 men, 200 women), promising a steady stream of visitors who will, thanks to the CAO and strong support from the Information Resources Officer in Islamabad and IIP, be able to showcase the best of American technology, culture, and literature while also participating in panel discussions on issues of importance to Pakistanis and Americans. ACPD applauds the CAO in Karachi in particular for extending the reach of U.S. public diplomacy activities in a critical yet non-permissive environment.